

T W O
S E R M O N S

Preach'd at the

Parish-Church

O F

St. George Botolph-Lane, LONDON,

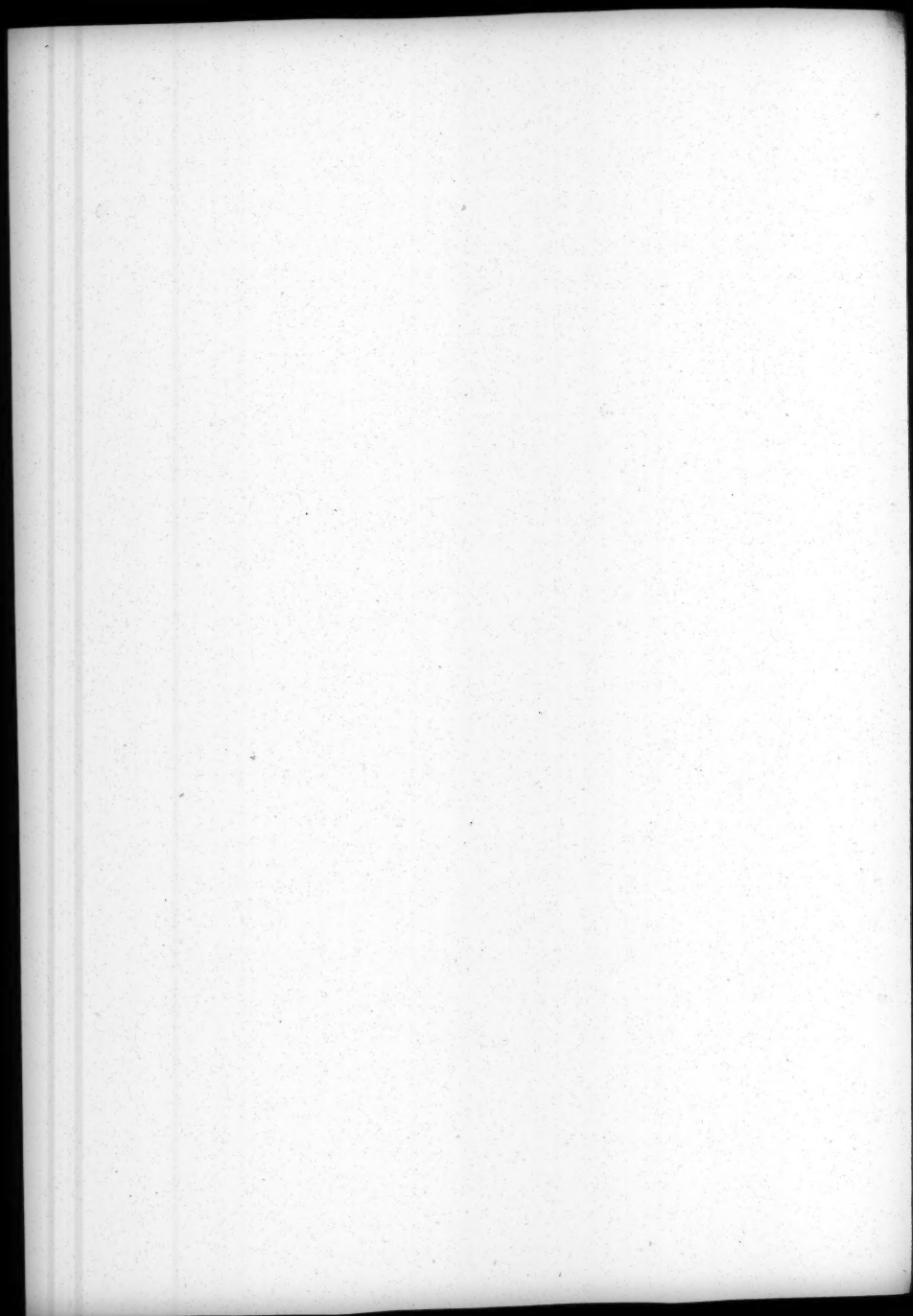
MAY the 12th. 1700.

By G E O R G E K E I T H.

Being his first Preaching after Ordination.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *W. Bowyer*, for *Brab. Aylmer* at the *Three Pigeons* in *Cornhil*; and *Char. Brome* at the *Gun* at the *West-End* of *St. Paul's Church-yard*. 1700.



N^o 13

Mr. *K E I T H*'s
Two Sermons,

Preach'd at

St. GEORGE BOTOLPH-LANE,

MAY the 12th 1700.



TWO
SERMONS
MORNING

First Church

2. LUKE 16.

And they were told by the Pharisees before God, saying
that in all their conversation and conversation
of the Lord



W

It is to be noted that the foregoing Verse is not
Nathan's, but a certain Part of the words of this, and
his Wife, the words of the daughters of Aaron.
But for the sake of the following Verse, I have
the text that I have read to you, I paraphrase (by God's Will)
to speak briefly by way of opening the several
Words of it.

And they were told by the Pharisees, They are said to be told
that they were told only to the particular Verse
concerning the Pharisees, and the Pharisees, which
is one of the four Evangelists, but all other Verses
both Moral and Theological, as appears by the following
Words.

M O R N I N G.

S. LUKE I 6.

And they were both Righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless.

WH O these both were, the foregoing Verse tells us, viz. *Zacharias*, a certain Priest of the course of *Abia*, and his Wife *Elizabeth*, of the Daughters of *Aaron*.

Before I proceed to any Doctrinal Observations on the Text that I have read to you, I purpose (by God's Assistance) to speak divers things by way of opening the several Words of it.

And they were both Righteous. They are said to be both Righteous, not with respect only to that particular Vertue, commonly called commutative and distributive Justice, which is one of the four Cardinal Vertues; but all other Vertues, both Moral and Theological, as appears by the following Words

Words that they walked in all the Commandments of God, which therefore consequentially and by consequence follow the Righteousness of Justification by Faith, as well as the Righteousness of Sanctification.

That *they were Righteous before God*, signifies their inward Sincerity and Integrity. Hypocrites may seem righteous before Men, but none are righteous before God but sincere believers.

Walking in all the Commandments: The Greek Word translated here *Walking*, signifies Journeying, going onward by progressive Motion, going from strength to strength, as it is *Psal.* 84. 7. This shews, that such Religion is not bare Talk or Theory, and meer Speculation, but a constant and diligent Practice, performing a continual Obedience to Gods Commands, expressed here by the Metaphor of Walking. This also imports, that the Commands of God, both respecting Faith and Moral Duties, are given us here in this World, to be the way that leads to the Heavenly Kingdom, as we walk in them, that is, as we obey them, and not otherwise. This first metaphor, was made by *Jeremiah*, *Jer.* 18. 21. that take heed unto the precepts of the Lord, or original Part of his divine Commands: and *Psalmist* neglected the precepts, the *Psalmist* who said *Psalmist* 119. and of this kind things, but neglected his law and judgments, and therefore the result, if they keep the commands, shall win them from the lesser, but seeing the who commands the greater, commands also, the lesser, as *St. James* saith, *He who offendeth in one, is guilty of all.* *Christian* who ever read *1st* *John* 2. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 77

and fervour of Love, and true Devotion unto God, that we ought to have, we fail, and sin in the Manner of our Performance. It is possible, by the grace of God, for the Faithful to keep all God's Commandes, for the Matter of them in a true sense; yet, seeing we very often fail in the right Way and Manner of our Performance of them, either in Prayer or any other Duty, we sin, and ought to be humbled for it, daily confess it, repent of it, and ask forgiveness of God, in the Name of Christ Jesus.

Commandments and Ordinances. By *Ordinances*, are understood all the Ceremonial and Levitical Precepts of the Law, called in *Heb. 9. 1.* *Ordinances of Service* pertaining to the Temple-Worship, and all the Rites and Shadows of the Law, so far as concerned them. By *Commandments*, are not only understood the Ten Precepts of the Moral Law, but all the positive Precepts of revealed Religion, so far as was discovered unto them in the Old Testament, and especially Faith in the promised Messiah, for remission of Sin, and the Faith and Hope of the Resurrection of the Dead, which the Faithful then had, as really as Believers now have, though not so fully and clearly revealed.

Blameless. Nor will this prove that they had attained a sinless Perfection, as some would infer; the Greek word signifies unreproachable, or without any crime or scandalous Practice; we are to distinguish between a *Crim* and a *Faulty* person may be, and oft are *Criminally*, that yet are not altogether *Faultless*.

Having thus far opened the Words, I shall oblige to you some profitable Doctrines and Instructions, that follow by way of Consequence, and Consolations from them. Which I do for a particular Reason, which ye shall afterwards know, not so much with respect to men here, but with respect to some

Stran-

examples, and some of my Friends, to whom I judge these Observations that I am about to give may be of service. I shall not hold to a single party but I shall be honest.

The first is this: That in a very corrupt state of a Church, there may and have been found, some excellently holy and righteous persons.

The second is this: That holy and righteous persons may and ought to remain in a Church, and not separate from it, if it have the true Notes and Marks of a Church, notwithstanding the Corruption of persons that may be in it. Suppose they who are so corrupt are the greatest number, and if nothing that is sinful be enjoined, or impos'd upon them, they may and ought to join with them in the publick Acts of God's Worship, notwithstanding the Corruptions of particular persons belonging to that Church, in some things both of Doctrine and Practice.

The third is this: That persons eminently holy and spiritual may have joyed, and consequently may join, with the body of a Congregation in the publick Worship of God, with Prayer and Thanksgiving, in the use of set Forms of Prayer and Thanksgiving, with joint vocal Praying and Singing with the multitude, without minding in their so doing as to the Matter of the Worship, as above explained, and without any hurt to their inward and spiritual state and frame of Mind, or quenching the Spirit.

To all these three I intend particularly to speak; and they will be found to flow very naturally, at least by way of Commentary, from the words of the Text.

To the first. The state of the Church of the Jews at this time, to which the words of the Text relate, was very corrupt.

fact: Some of them believ'd not the Doctrine of the Resurrec-
 tion of the dead, as the Sadducees: The Pharisees and Phe-
 sees had corrupted the true sense of the Law with their false
 Gloses in divers things, as is clear from our Saviour's Sermon
 on the Mount, wherein he mildly so chargeth them, and
 from other places, where he manifestly and expressly so doth,
 as *Matth. 15. 3, 6, 7, 8, 9*. Also their Practices were very cor-
 rupt: though they made long Prayers, they devour'd Widows
 Houses. The High Priests were not at this very time of the
 Possibility of *Levi*, nor yet of the Tribe of *Levi*, and yet
 they were said to attain to the Dignity of the High Priesthood,
 and the glory of the People at this very time were very
 corrupt, rude, and ignorant, and many of them vicious: yet
 for all this, there were two such eminently holy and righteous
 persons in one House. And in their Infancy, *Joseph* and
Mary, the Mother of our Lord; also that good Old man *Sime-
 on*, and *Anna* who served God with Fasting and Prayer day
 and night in the Temple; *Nathaniel*, in whom was no guile;
John of *Azareth*, and *Maria* and all these were before our
 Saviour's Preaching, and passing; there were so before *John*
 Preaching. Now these excellent Persons, so eminently pious,
 and not separate from the Temple-Worship, and make up a
 Church by themselves, but remain'd in eternal Communion
 with the true Church; nor did either of them so off, as
 our divided Lord, (keep any separate Communities from the
 Jewish Church during the whole time of their Ministry: our
 Saviour frequented the Temple and the Synagogue, and us'd
 of the Old Testament, and preach'd in the Synagogue. Nor
 did *John*: Preaching in the Wilderness, and Christ's Preaching
 in the Wilderness, and sometimes on a Mountain, at
 other times by the Sea-side, make that they made any schism
 or separation from the Jewish Church, seeing they frequented
 the publick Worship, and observ'd all the Ordinances of the
 Law; for Christ came to fulfil the Law, and did so exactly

fulfill

fulfill it in all points in his own Person, and that for our
 sake. It was an allowed common Practice at that time, and
 long before, as well as after, among the Jews, for particular
 persons, who professed to have knowledge of the Law, and of
 divine Mysteries, to gather Disciples and Profelyes to them,
 whom they taught apart, and these were called Rabbies, that
 is, Masters, who did assume to themselves, and their Doctrines
 and Words, not only an Authority equal, but superiour to the
 Holy Scriptures (as can be proved out of the Rabbinical Au-
 thors;) for which cause our Saviour did sharply, and most
 justly, reprehend them, not simply for the Name Rabbi or
 Master, but for their Pride and high Conceit of themselves,
 boasting in their knowledge, though they were greatly igno-
 rant and unlearned: for which cause our Saviour bid his Disci-
 ples beware of the Leaven of the *Pharisees*, by which he meant
 their Doctrine, to wit, such Doctrine as they taught, as their
 private Opinions, and Expositions of the Law, which they did
 not teach as being in *Moses* Command; for what they taught ac-
 cording to the Law of *Moses*, the People were to hear them,
 as Christ commanded; they were to do as they said (out
 of *Moses* Command) but not as they did. Had either our Savi-
 our, or his Disciples, offended from the Publick Worship at
 the Temple, no doubt they would have made it a great mat-
 ter of accusation against him, but this they neither did, nor
 could justly do, because he did every thing that was enjoin-
 ed according to the Law, and not only frequented the Tem-
 ple, but the Synagogues, together with the People that met
 together to pray, especially in the Temple: and so no doubt
 it was the practice of *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, to pray with
 the People, as it is said *Luke* 1. ver. 10. and the whole Mul-
 titude of the People were praying without, at the time of
 Incense; but at that time *Zacharias* was performing his Of-
 fice in the holy place, called the inner Court, his lot falling
 to be in course.

But to go farther backward. How many Instances have we in the days of *Moses*, and the succeeding Prophets, whose Sons of *Belial* were among that People, whom yet God owned to be his People, and did not reject them from being his Church, even when they rebelled against him in the Wilderness. They are called the Church, *Acts 7. 38.*

To the second. That holy and righteous Persons may and ought to remain in a Church, and not separate from it, if it have the true Notes and Marks of a Church, though there may be Corruptions both as to Doctrine and Practice in the same, if nothing that is sinful be imposed or enjoined on them. That they did not separate, is already proved; and that they did not sin in remaining in the external Communion of the Church, but that they did what was commanded, in continuing with the multitude in the Publick Worship, is also clear from the words of the Text; for had they sinned in continuing in that external Communion, and joyning with them in the Publick Worship, they should not have had this great Commendation given them here in the words of the Text, that *they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God*; whereof their worshipping God in the Temple with the multitude, was a part. And had it been any Sin to have joyned with the Multitude in the Publick Worship, Christ, who never knew Sin, had not countenanced it: He forbid the People indeed to follow their blind Guides, telling them, *If the blind follow the blind, both must fall into the ditch.* But this was only forbidding to follow them in receiving their blind and false Doctrine.

This I the rather insist upon, because of divers I know are here, who are not of the Church of *England*; some of whom God hath made me instrumental in his great Mercy, to bring off from the vile Errors of *Quakerism*; yet it remains

moves a Scruple with them to join with the Church of Eng-
 land, because, as is affirmed by many, she is Corrupt, at least
 with respect to the Practice of many, called her Members;
 they think not join in any part of the Worship of God with
 such corrupt Persons, is a sin, and will defile them. The
 contrary whereof, they may perceive from what I have said
 upon the Supposition, That the present State of the Church
 were as corrupt as the State of the *Jews* then was; but I
 am far from thinking, that the Church is such. I am well
 persuaded, that she doth incomparably excel it in many re-
 spects, and is to be preferred to any I know in the World,
 having many more excellently and eminently holy Persons
 in her Communion than the *Jewish* Church then had; for
 though there were some in the *Jewish* Church very emi-
 nently Holy, yet so far as we find on Record, they were
 but few in number. Notwithstanding *John's* Preaching,
 who preach'd with great Zeal and Power; and our Savi-
 our's Preaching, who *spake as never Man spake*, yet, even at
 the Day of Pentecost, they were but an Hundred and twenty
 in Number; but I charitably believe, there are many
 Thousands of eminently holy and pious Persons in her Com-
 munion. And for such as are openly Vicious, that appear
 in her Publick Assemblies, it may be said as *St. Paul* said of
Israel, *They are not all Israel who are called Israel*: It is that
 which happens to all Communions, that there is a mixt Au-
 ditory that frequent their Assemblies; and as Christ hath
 taught us, the Kingdom of God, that is, the visible State of
 the Church, is like to five Wise Virgins and five Foolish;
 and there will be Tares and Chaff among the good Seed and
 Corn, until the Harvest; and that is the end of the World.

To the Third, That Persons eminently holy and spi-
 ritual, may and ought to join with with the Publick
 Prayers of the Church, notwithstanding of the Corrup-
 tions

tion of particular Members, as above-mentioned; and yet
 yet, when they pray in Set-Forms, and with joint Voca-
 ces. This may be a sort of all digest, being prejudicial
 against all Set-Forms of Prayer, however for formal and
 good, yet, against the praying the Lords Prayer, as con-
 sidering that all such manner of Prayer will quench the
 Spirit, and thus, and quite kill and extinguish all spirit
 that Life and Motion in them.

I freely confess, I have been prejudiced my self
 against all Set-Forms of Prayer, having the same Opin-
 ion that I and others now have; but I bless God, I
 not only have seen the Error of that, but have found
 by true Experience, that to join with the Faithful in the
 Publick Prayer, in Set-Forms of Sound Words, is so
 far from being any hurt, or cause to kill and extinguish
 spiritual Life in the Soul, that I have found my very
 Heart and Soul spiritually Refreshed and Comforted in
 joining therewith; and I thank God, that I am, and do
 with great inward Freedom, Peace and Satisfaction, both
 pray and praise God with you. And, that which has
 ever lay to that to, is the deep Prejudice they have
 let in against the way of praying by Forms, being mis-
 informed by their Teachers.

What I have said on a former Occasion in a
 rather plain, I will at present give you two places of
 Scripture, to prove, That it was the Way and Manner
 of the Publick Worship of God in the Jewish Church,
 for the People to pray with their Voice jointly; the
 one place is in Psalm 124. Forasmuch as the People
 have now with their Mouths, and with their Lips do ob-
 serve me, but have removed their Heart far from me, &c.
 It plainly appears from this, what was the Manner
 of the Publick Worship of God in the Jewish Church,
 in the Days of Joshua and the other Prophets, that the

People pray'd with the Minister or Priest, vocally with Mouth and Lips; God did not blame them simply for that, but that while they gave him the external part of Worship with their Mouths and Lips, they gave him not the internal also, without which the external is not acceptable; they gave him not their Heart, but removed it far from him. This was too general among them; but yet, neither *Isaiah*, nor any others of the Faithful who were singled among them, and served God sincerely both with Heart and Mouth, did separate from the Publick Worship. This same place is quoted, and apply'd by our Saviour against the Scribes and Pharisees, their hypocritical Prayers with their Mouths and Lips, *Matth. 23. 34.*

Mark 16. 7. *Go ye into every City, &c.* (If any say, this is not to be understood of their praying in the Publick Worship with vocal Prayer, but in their private Devotions. To this I answer: 1st. This is not only alledged, but not proved. 2^{ly}. The contrary can be proved; for if Persons are so pray vocally with their Mouths in private, for as good reason, they are so pray vocally with their Mouths in publick, the external part of Worship being commanded as well as the internal, in publick as well as in private. Though in Men's private Devotions, they can act so pray as to be heard of others, as the Disciples did whom Christ reproved; yet they may pray as the *Widow*, *1 Sam. 2. 19.* Now *Hezekiah* the *Israhel*ite, when alone, only her Lips moved, but her Voice was not heard. In Publick Worship there is this Difference, that our Voice is to be heard, that others may know that we pray the same Prayer with them.

The other place is *Matth. 18. 19.* *Then I will be with you, &c.* *And if ye shall say on Earth, &c.* and *bind on Earth, &c.* *shall be bound in Heaven.* God being in number eight Persons particularly named; and *Verily, I say unto you, &c.*

and *Kolossai. Barn. 8. 2* said [unto the People] Stand up, and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever, and ascribe to thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. And then the People with the Levites, as is clear from ver. 1. and 2. joined in vocal Prayer with them, for it is said, ver. 2. And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers: and ver. 3. One fourth part of the day they stood in the book of the law of the Lord their God, and another fourth part they confessed and worshipped the Lord their God. And thus they began, and went on together, from ver. 5. to the end of that Chapter, saying, *Blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise: thou, Lord, thou art Lord alone, thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the sun, and all things that are therein, the firm, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all, and the host of heaven worshippeth thee, &c.* That ancient excellent Hymn which is a part of the Church of England's Liturgy, compos'd above twelve hundred years ago, as is probably thought by *St. Ambrose*, which begins, *We praise thee, O God, &c.* doth very much resemble this in *Exord* and *Prese.*

By the Scriptures above cited, and divers others that might be cited, it plainly appears, that the People had a part with the Minister in the external part of God's Worship, praying vocally together with him, and that they did so, as being their Duty, and in Obedience to God's Command, to whom we owe as well the external Worship of our Bodies as the internal Worship of our Souls; seeing we owe to him the Creation of our Souls and Bodies, and the Preservation of both, and all our Blessings both inward and outward; and he hath redeemed both by the precious Blood of Christ; therefore we are to glorify him both with our Souls and with our Bodies, which are his, and to offer up unto him the Calves of our Lips, *Hos. 14. 2.* and the Fruit of our Lips, *Eph. 13. 15.*

And

(179)

And as so to do is a Commanded Duty, so it is a great Favour and Privilege, that God Almighty has bestow'd upon all his People; that they call upon him Vocally with their Mouths and Lips, jointly, as well as with their Hearts and Spirits: And therefore whoever by their Doctrine teach People that they should not do so, commit a Twofold Evil:

First, That they deny and take away that Honour that is due to God from the People, by this way of Worshipping him in Prayer and Thanksgiving, with their Mouths and Lips, as well as with their Hearts; what God hath put together, they ought not to put asunder.

Secondly, They deprive the People of the high Favour and Privilege that he has bestow'd upon them, to allow them to speak unto him (not always by a Proxy, or the Mouth of another, but) by their own Mouths; for God's People, both under the Old and New Testament, is called by him a Royal Priesthood, who offer up unto him their Sacrifices, and have a near Access to him, through their great High-Priest *Jesus Christ*, their and our alone Mediator. Under the Old Testament there was this Order: First, The High-Priest was concerned in some parts of God's Service that were proper and peculiar to him; in which respect he was (so to speak) nearest to God. Secondly, The Priests were concerned in some parts of God's Service proper and peculiar to them, which did not belong to the *Levites*; and they were in the next degree of Nearness. Thirdly, The *Levites* were concerned in some parts of God's Service proper to them, which did not belong to the People. Fourthly, and Lastly, There was a part of God's Service that was common to the People, with all the other Three; and that was to Worship God together, jointly, with Vocal Prayer and Thanksgiving, together with them; as being in all these Four degrees a Holy and Royal Priesthood unto God, to offer up together their Sacrifices unto him; in which respect they were a People near unto him, above all other Nations; as it is written *Deut. 4. 7. For what nation is there so great, who hath*

God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

It proceeds from great Ignorance, that the Name of a Priest is so much reproached by many who call themselves Christians; they think they cannot call a Man by a greater Name of Contempt, than to call him *Priest*; whereas the Name is Honourable, though it be abusively given to many that are not worthy of it: Our Blessed Lord Himself is called *Priest* frequently in Scripture, and is the High-Priest of our Profession; and not only they who minister the Word and Sacraments, but the whole Body of the Faithful, are a Royal Priesthood unto God, to whom some part of God's Service doth belong, as that of Prayer and Thanksgiving, both with Heart and Mouth, and in Spirit and Truth, that is acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ. The Greek word that is Translated *Priest* in English, is *ιερευς*, from *ιερως*, i. e. *holy*, which signifieth one that is conversant, or exercised in holy things, to wit, in the holy Service of God; a special part of which is Prayer and Thanksgiving, both with the Heart and Mouth, that belongs to the whole Congregation of God's People, who are a Holy and Royal Priesthood unto him.

In

In the Afternoon.

LUKE I. 6. *And they were both Righteous, &c.*

THAT I may with the greater Clearness Answer to certain Objections that some will be ready to make against what I have above delivered, I will here Answer a Weightry Question.

Q. By what Power or Ability did these two Eminently virtuous Persons, and all others under the Old Testament, walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God? And particularly by what Ability did they Worship God in their Prayers and Thanksgivings?

Ans. By the same Power and Ability of the Holy Spirit, and his Saving and Sanctifying Gifts and Graces, by which the Faithful under the New Testament did walk in all God's Commandments, and serve him with Prayers and Thanksgivings: For as the Church of God is one and the same Collective Body of a Church for substance, both under the Old and New Testament, however otherwise differing in respect of the various Administrations, and other Circumstances: So the Spirit is one that did and doth inspire both, enlighten, quicken, and enable the Faithful in both, to perform their respective Duties and Services.

I shall now only bring you Two places of Scripture to prove, That the Church of the *Jews*, under the Old Testament, had the Holy Spirit given them, as well as the Church hath it now given under the New Testament: The One is *Nehem. 9. 20.*

*Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and with-holdest not thy Manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. If any say, The Spirit was given to them in the Prophets, but not in themselves. I Answer; As it was given to the Prophets by Extraordinary Inspiration and Prophecy, so it was given to the People by Ordinary Inspiration, to enable them both to believe and understand what the Prophets taught, and also to practice what God by the Prophets commanded them. And that this was as universally given to them inwardly, as the Manna and the Water was to them outwardly, is evident from the words quoted; I say, given and offered to them on God's part, though properly received by none but the Faithful on their part, as the Manna and Water was given to them all, yet if any would not eat the Manna, nor drink the Water, they would have perished for all that. The Other place of Scripture is *Isaiah 59. 21. This is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord, My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy friend's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever.**

This Covenant is the Covenant of Grace that God has made with Christ, and through him with all Believers, from the beginning to the end of the World, who are his Seed, and Seed's seed; and this Covenant is the same for substance in all Ages, as well under the Old Testament, as under the New, and hath the same Promises as to the main and chiefest things, to wit, Forgiveness of Sin, for Christ's sake, and the Holy Spirit, with his Saving Gifts and Graces (to sanctify them, and enable them to serve God acceptably) and Eternal Life and Salvation. And the Faith that they had who lived under the Old Testament, and served God acceptably, is one and the same with the Faith of sincere Christians under the New Testament, differing but in some Circumstances; they believed in him that was to come; we believe in him that is come; they believed that the Blood of Christ, the Promised Messiah, and Seed of the Woman, should be

be shed for the Remission of their Sins; of which they were taught and kept in remembrance by the Blood of the Sacrifices, which was a Type of that most excellent and efficacious Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood, that was to be shed for them; and we believe that his Blood hath been shed for us, and that Christ our Passover and Sacrifice is slain for us: They had the same Object and Foundation of Faith and Hope that we have, but not so explicitly and clearly revealed; it is said, *Heb. 11. These all died in faith; and by faith they walked with God, and looked for a City which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God; and sought the heavenly Country, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth.* Heb. 11. 9, 10, 13, 14, 16.

It is therefore a great error in them, who think that the Church under the Old Testament, was a Carnal Church, and their Worship altogether carnal; their Faith a Carnal Faith, having only Carnal Promises, and Carnal and Earthly things only promised to them; for all the Faithful under that Dispensation had the same Spiritual things, and Promises, and Worship that true Christians now have. It is also a great Error in them who now say and teach, that there is no absolute need of any special help or aid of the Holy Spirit, by special Divine Influence to help or assist us in obeying God's Commands, and so worship him acceptably, which was the old *Pelagian* Heretic that is revived in many hereaway, and elsewhere.

What I have above said is sufficient to answer that Objection, that many I know do make against Set Forms of Prayer now under the New Testament; they will grant that the Church in the Publick Worship of God, had set Forms of Prayer and Thanksgiving under the Old Testament; but they deny that therefore it follows, that the Church should have them under the New Testament, because the Worship then was Carnal, but now it is Spiritual; they had carnal Commandments, and carnal Ordinances; but the Church under the New Testament is a Spiritual House, the Worship and Ordinances Spiritual; and by

by the like way of arguing, they say, Though the Church under the Old Testament had many Corruptions, and a great mixture of corrupt Members; yet it is not so under the New Testament.

To both which, what is above said may sufficiently answer. The Worship of God, which the Church of God under the Old Testament performed, as with respect to the Faithful, was a Spiritual Worship, and that Worship was required of them as truly then, as it is required now; God then required the Heart, as well as now, and blamed them who drew near to him with the Mouth, but had removed their Hearts far away from him, as is above shewed. The Ceremonial Precepts of the Law, that were the Figures and Shadows, were called carnal Ordinances, in respect of the many outward things that were carnal, that were enjoined to them, but not in respect of the inward Habit and Frame of their Hearts and Minds; for that was required to be spiritual, and was spiritual in all the Faithful: And although it is granted, that comparatively the Church under the New Testament, in respect of the generality, was to be more spiritual, having the Promises of greater measures of the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, than the Church under the Old Testament had; yet with respect to many Particulars, they far exceeded any of us in Spirituality; yet these most eminently holy and virtuous Persons went always with the Multitude, and joined with them in the Publick Worship of God; while (as to the matter of it) it was according to what God had commanded, as it generally was, excepting some particular cases.

And as I have above shewed, that the State of the Church under the Old Testament, did consist of a great mixture, and had great Corruptions in it, which yet was no cause or ground of separation to the Faithful, who still continued among them; I shall now shew the like in divers Churches in the New Testament, who yet were owned of God to be true Churches.

Many in the Churches of the *Galatians* were greatly corrupted in the Doctrine of Justification, and divers other things, yet *Paul* did not disown them to be a Church, nor bid them separate or divide. In the Church of *Corinth* divers of them denied the Resurrection of the Body, as is clear from *1 Cor. 15.* and had divers great Failings in their Practice, and were very irregular in the manner of receiving the Lord's Supper, and did receive it unworthily; yea some were drunk, which was a very bad preparation to that Holy Ordinance; yet he bid them not separate, and set up a distinct Communion, but sharply blames them for the Divisions that were among them.

He bid them indeed come out from among Unbelievers, and be separate from them, and to purge out the old Leaven; but all this respects the right administration of Discipline in the Church; scandalous Persons ought to be regularly dealt with, and proceeded against; and if they prove obstinate after due admonition, they are to be excommunicated, whether the Crime be of Heresie, or evil practice: But the Power of Excommunication doth not belong to private Persons in the Church, but to the Rulers and Governors that God hath set up in the Church. If any in the Church offend you with their scandalous Practices, ye ought first to admonish them; and if they regard it not, nor amend, ye ought to inform against them to the Minister, and the Minister ought to inform to the Bishop; and if he neglect his Duty, he must answer to God for it: But in the mean time ye ought not to forsake the Church for the default of particular Persons in it; what cannot be amended, must be born, unless there be a general Apostacy or Corruption in the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith, or in Scandalous Practices; which, blessed be God, is not our case in this Church, where the Doctrine is sound, and the Lives and Conversations of many agreeable to the Gospel; and for such who are scandalous, though they frequent the Publick Assemblies, as they do in all External Communions, why may not the Excuse that serves for one, serve for another? that is (say they) though they come among us, yet they are not of us. We

We find in the Book of the Revelations, that five at least of the seven Churches of Asia, that St. John writ unto, were severely reprov'd, and especially the Angels; i. e. the Governors of these Churches, for suffering things which they ought not to have suffered, or for their slackness and remissness in what belonged to them. The Church of Sardis is not blamed for Corruption in Doctrine, but for her Formality, and defect of good Works; yet she is owned to be a true Church, by the Spirit of God in *John*. A Church as well as other things receive the denomination, sometimes *à potiore parte*; i. e. from the better part, and not always from the greater part; the few Names in Sardis, that had not defiled their Garments, gave her the denomination of a Church, even by the Spirit of God; nor did the Defilements of many, or the greater number that were joined together in the External Communion, or profession of Membership, defile those other that were sincere.

The use of this is of great service to instruct those who think they cannot be joined in an External Communion with any Society of People professing Christianity, that hath any scandalous Professors among them, but they must be defiled with them; the Prayers of the one sort will hinder the Prayers of the sincere from being accepted; If they partake with them at the Lord's Supper, who are not so regular and exact as they are, they think they are defiled with them, they think they are forbidden to partake in the Lord's Supper with them; for which some bring, *1 Cor. 5. 11. If any man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or covetous, &c. with such a one no not to eat*; but it is a mistake, that by eating there is meant eating at the Lord's Supper; I agree with them who judge 'twas not that, but ordinary eating; So that they were forbidden to have particular Conversation with such, yet they were not to forsake the Church because of them; but if they knew such, to make a regular complaint, that due and regular Discipline might be exercised towards them.

And

And the like Mistake they fall into, who argue from 2 *Tim.* 3: 6: 9: where the Apostle bids *Timothy* turn away from such as were vicious Persons, and had a Form of Godliness, but denied the Power thereof; but therefore none that are sincerely godly ought to remain in External Communion with that Church where there are any such vicious Persons. But they should consider to whom this is directed, to *Timothy*, who was Bishop of *Ephesus*, to whom it belonged by his Episcopal Office to reject such, and turn them away (as the *Greek* word will bear it) or turn them out of the Church, even as the Civil Magistrate is to turn vicious persons, that deserve it, out of the City; but this doth not belong to private persons, they have no power to punish either with banishment or death, Criminal persons how much sower they deserve it: Even so it belongs wholly to Ecclesiastick Officers, to reject and cast out scandalous persons; and if they do it now it is their sin, if they have due information or notice of them: But yet that is no warrant for any to forsake the Communion of the Church. There were not only great defaults in the Church of the *Jews*, among private persons, but in the Ecclesiastick Rulers at divers times, and remissness of Discipline, which the true Prophets reproved them for, yet they did not separate from them.

So long as a Society of people professing Christianity, has the true Notes of a Church, and that nothing sinful in the matter of Worship is enjoined or impos'd upon any, we ought not to separate from such a Church: But this gives no strength to the Church of *Rome* to charge us with Schism for our separation from her, because she enjoins many sinful things to be practised by her Members, in the Worship of God, which no good Christian ought to practise; and there is a general Corruption both in Doctrine and Practise in her professed Members; yet we ought to distinguish betwixt the corrupt Faction prevailing in the Church, and others that may, and do there remain, that are not of them: We are to distinguish betwixt *Babylon* and the Church of God in *Babylon*, and betwixt the Temple of God, and *Antichrist* sitting in the Temple of God. The people of God are

commanded to come out of *Babylon*. *Rev. 18. 4*, which proves he had and hath a people in *Babylon*, even Mystical *Babylon*, that is, the corrupt state of the Church of *Rome*.

The Church of God hath not utterly failed during all the time of the great Apostacy and Defection, that hath prevailed over many, otherwise Christ's Promise had failed, *That the gates of Hell should not prevail against her*. And as she hath continued, so an outward Ministry of the Word hath continued also, by which she hath been fed and nourished; for God never for his Church in any Age, without the outward Word and Doctrine, and without some outward Ministry; which therefore notwithstanding of some Corruptions that might be generally among them, and in the better and purer sort of them, did not hinder, but that their Ministry did good, and fed many; while they taught the Fundamentals and Essentials of Christianity, together with some Errors, though very hurtful, yet not Fundamental, God might and did make the more pure part of the Doctrine they preached, an Antidote against the more impure and hurtful; like the Pottage that had some poisonous Herb in it, and when it was told the Prophet *Elisha*, *There is death in the Pot*, yet by the word of the Lord, they might and did eat without harm. Though there is great danger of salvation in the Church of *Rome*, yet few so uncharitable among *Protestants*, that will say, that salvation's impossible to any of them: *Culvin* that famous Reformer, was of another mind, and said plainly, *That God could save even in Babylon*. But that's no argument, nor encouragement to any to hold communion with her.

But in the enquiry, Which Church we ought to join with, while there are so many various cries, *Lo here, and lo there*; we are to distinguish betwixt a Church that has the Essentials, and a Church that has not only them, but the Integrals; and surely the Church that is the most compleat and intire, both for Essentials and Integrals in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government, nearest approaching to the Scripture-Pattern, and the next Ages to the Apostles; when it is confessed, there was the great-

est purity; that is the Church that ought to be preferr'd, and
 that (upon the best search and enquiry that I could make, with
 reading and meditation in the Holy Scriptures, Prayer and
 Conference, and observation of Things and Persons) I found to
 be the *Church of England*; where I find not only the Doctrine to
 be sound (as is confessed by the Dissenters generally); but that
 the matter and manner of Worship is most agreeable to Scripture,
 and where the Administration of the Sacraments and Ordinati-
 on to the Ministry is most agreeable to Scripture, and more than
 any where that I can find among all the several Sects of them.
 I speak not this to exasperate any, I am put upon my defence
 and apology in the case; Not only many of the People called
Quakers, but others cry out against me for joining with the
Church of England, which I thank God I have done with great
 inward satisfaction, and peace of Conscience; and I think I can
 give to any that are impartial, and without prejudice, a reasona-
 ble account of my so doing. It is suggested against me, That I
 have received Ordination into the Church of *England* for a
 worldly Living; like some that said, *Put me into the Priests Of-
 fice, that I may eat a piece of Bread*: But I pray God forgive them
 for their uncharitableness. The searcher of hearts knows, that
 no worldly thing hath been my Motive or end in what I have
 done; but finding that God hath been graciously pleased to bless
 my poor endeavours with some success, even to some here in
England; as well as to others in *America*, to have been an instru-
 ment to bring them off from the vile Errors of *Quakerism*, I
 found my self further concerned; and I hope I can, and dare say,
 moved and inclined by the blessed Spirit of God, to endeavour
 to bring them further onwards; that is to say, not only to be
 convinced, that Baptism and the Supper are the Institutions of
 Christ, which many of them are well convinced of, but to submit
 to them in practice; and divers of them have desired me to ad-
 minister Baptism unto them; which I told them I could not do
 without External Ordination; for that there ought to be an
 outward Order and Government in the Church of Christ, as
 well as the inward of the Spirit.

The Faith and Hope which God had given me, that as he had blessed my Labours with some Success for some years past, in exercising my Gift as a Catechist among some people, in reducing them from their grossest Errors, that he would further bless my Endeavours, not only to them, but to others, in a more general Service, together with the inward clearness and satisfaction I found in my Conscience, and not any worldly respect, was the Motive and Encouragement that inclin'd me to receive Ordination in the Church of *England*, which I knew not where to find so regular any where else.

I thank God, I am not put so hard to it for Bread, but that I have sufficient at present, by Divine Providence, *without that they call a Living*, and I seek and aim at no great things in the World. But it is great Ignorance and Prejudice in many that think, Whoever have a comfortable Living or Maintenance who Preach the Gospel, must be Hirelings, and Mercenary, must sell the Gospel for Money, must be Covetous, and transgress Christ's Command, that said, *Freely ye have received; freely give*; it is one thing to have a Gospel-maintenance, and another thing to Preach for it. Gospel-Ministers may and do Preach the Gospel freely, and yet have a Gospel-maintenance, that is, the free Gift of the People, given by them, for most part many Ages past, for that use, and also given and appointed by Christian Magistrates. The greatest Temporals can bear no proportion with the least of Spirituals, so as that Spirituals neither can nor ought to be sold. It is also great Ignorance in them that say, Paying and receiving Tythes is a denying of Christ come in the Flesh; arguing, That it was a part of the Ceremonial Law. But First, That they have not proved, nor, I think, can they prove. Secondly, Suppose the manner of paying Tythes to the *Levitical* Priesthood was Ceremonial, yet that will not infer, that to pay a Tenth, that is freely given by the first Owners to support a Gospel-Ministry, is Ceremonial, seeing it is to a different end, and in a different manner. Things and Actions are specified from their ends. We may as well argue the *Quakers* coming up yearly

ly to *London* in great Numbers at the Feast of *Pentecost*, which they observe with so great Solemnity above any other day that I know, is a denying of Christ come in the Flesh; for the Feast of *Pentecost* was Ceremonial: If they say, they keep it not to that end and intent that the *Jews* kept it: the like Answer will serve them that either give or receive Tythes; They neither give nor receive them to uphold a Levitical Priesthood, but to support a Gospel-Ministry. And by the like Argument they use against Tythes, we may argue against them, That they are not to kill a Beast to eat it, because the Priests under the Law did kill the clean Beasts for a Sacrifice, which partly they did also eat of. Here we see one and the same Action, having differing ends, may be, and is lawful, when done for one end, and unlawful when done for another. They do as ignorantly argue, that Tythes are the Foundation of their Gospel who take Tythes; because (say they) take away the Tythes, and other Maintenances, and their Gospel will cease; so take away all Meat and Drink from the *Quakers* Ministers, and their Ministry will as much cease; is therefore their Meat and Drink the Foundation of their Ministry? The greatest use and service that either Tythes, or any other Maintenance given to the Ministry has, is no more, but what the dead and dry Sticks or Stakes put in the Ground, have to support the Vines in Vineyards, that they may be fruitful; they receive no moisture nor virtue from the Sticks, but from the Earth wherein they are planted.

Thus they have deceived many, and exposed them by false Persuasions and Arguments to divers Sufferings, which they have taught them to call Persecution, for detaining the Tythes which are not their own, and which they have no right to detain. All is not Persecution which is called Persecution; That Liberty is granted to tender Consciences, that hold the Essentials of Christianity, and are of a peaceable Conversation and Spirit, I well approve of: Persecution generally hardens People in their Errors, rather than that it reforms them. But a boundless

boundless Liberty, without any restraint, to Ranters, and open Blasphemers against God and Christ, and gross Lyes, and false Prophets, who with their Lyes and false Prophecies hurt people in their outward Estates, is of a dangerous Consequence. In Deut. 13. the Lesson of this day now read, *False Prophets, that taught the people to go after other Gods, and to serve them, were to be put to death*; that is, such as should arise among themselves. But this did not concern the Heathens: And as concerning Christians, if any shall arise among them that shall teach open Blasphemy against God and Christ,

* Dr. Coady, a Presbyterian Minister, in his Book called *Independency a Schism*.

as the Ranters did, should they be tolerated? An Eminent Dissenter hath * made this Observation on the vast Toleration that was given in the Time of the Commonwealth Government, "That the Seven years Toleration then given, had done more hurt to Religion, than all that could be called Persecution for Seventy years before that."

I acknowledge Persecution, properly and truly understood (that is, when any suffer for Truth and Righteousness) is a great Sin; but every degree of Persecution, acted by a Faction and prevailing Party in a Church, doth not unchurch them until it comes to a great height (nor did unchurch the Church of Rome, simply for that) as is clear from *Matth. 21. 33. to 43. The husbandmen that stoned some and killed others of their Lord's servants, were not cast out of the Vineyard until they had killed the heir himself*. The People of Jerusalem did in the foregoing Ages evil intreat the Lord's Prophets, and kill them, as Christ charged them, saying, *O Jerusalem, that killest the Prophets*, *Matth. 23. 37*. Yet God did not cast them off from being his Church; for he beareth long with a People before he utterly cast them off.

All the other Dissenters (the Presbyterians excepted) have no Ordination to the Ministry by any Authority, either of Bishops or Presbyters, but reject all pretence to both, [which I judge to be an Error in them] the Presbyterians here in Eng-

land,

(34)

land commonly derive their Ordination by or through the Line of Protestant Bishops, whom they look upon to have been of God's raising up, to reform from Popery; and if their Ordination was valid to them, it is still valid to others, and to me. And as for the Line of Succession since the Apostles days, we need not to be anxious about it, so as to conclude either that the Church or Ministry hath ceased, because the Line is not so visibly and clearly to be seen either in the Church of *Rome*, or *England*, in continual succession of Men that were sound in the Faith, in all the Essentials of it, during the dark Night of Error that hath obscured it.

—What if God should be pleased at this present time so to illuminate some Popish Bishops in *Italy*, *Spain*, *France*, *Germany*, &c. and inspire them with a holy Zeal to renounce Popery, and set up for a Reformation, would not all the Dissenters rejoice with us, and be ready to say, Let them go on and prosper? should they need any new Ordination to exercise their Episcopal Function? When God Almighty debased *Nebuchadnezzar* for his Pride, and took from him the Heart of a Man, and gave him the Heart of a Beast, until seven times passed over him; and after that took from him the Heart of a Beast, and gave him the Heart of a Man, and caused his Understanding to return to him: Did he need a new Coronation? or might he not exercise his Regal Authority, as he did before, without any new Coronation or Inauguration? Was the Ministry of Popish Bishops and Teachers like poisonous Waters? and were the Waters cured of the poisonous quality, and made healthful here in *England*? must we now refuse to drink them, after they are become healthful, because they were loathsome before? The Church was to be reform'd, and not new founded; the ancient Foundations preserved, and only the Rubbish separated, and cast away, which was done at the Reformation, by the first Reformers here in *England*, who were some of them Bishops, and others of them generally such as owned Episcopal Government as an Appointment of Christ in the Church.

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